

Freedom

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Summary: The story of two best friends and their fight to survive the fall of Reach

## 1. Fear

Freedom

Steve stared at the tinned shit they called food out there on duty he thought it was unfair that the CO got five star dinning and the army grunts like him got something that reminded him of something he'd once seen come out the back of one of his comrades heads. Then he remembered arguing or complaining was above his pay grade so he took another mouthful of army food and another swig of army water and thought about the task at hand when he saw Private Adams his current back-up, best friend and competition in the weekly drink off. "Adams over here my man" he shouted, Adams turned round to see who was shouting on him "oh hey Steve nice to see you but how many times my names Dave not Adams can you not get that through your skull" Adams sat down beside Steve and looked sullenly at his food. "What's wrong big guy your pet rock shatter" Steve asked slightly too cheerily "no my brother was shot last night doctors did everything they could but he didn't make it" a tear ran down Adams cheek. "I'm so sorry bro but a least he died fighting for a better future for humanity, fighting for the freedom to go outside without fear of covenant force shooting you in the face without the fear that tomorrow you'll wake up to see your planet glassed. "I suppose so thanks that makes me feel better" "always there for a fellow marine" just as they were about to head out the alarm sirens started blaring. "Covenant? " Dave said quizzically "but this ship is in orbit above Reach they can't have found us here" then they heard the captain shouting into the loud speaker "all combat teams to hangar three Reach is under attack from the covenant this is not a drill repeat not a drill" "you heard the man hangar 3 double time" shouted the sergeant. All the soldiers ran to hangar three as fast as their trained legs could carry them. The captain of this particular cruiser was Jacob Keyes a decorated veteran, Adams nudged Steve and pointed to the far end of the hangar

"look" he whispered "Spartans" Steve looked to see if he was kidding but no there was a group of Spartans cleaning their weapons at the far end of the hangar. "Holy shit" he replied "we're dropping in with those guys this is more serious than I thought". "Listen up" shouted captain Keyes "we detected a covenant fleet approaching Reach at 0800 hours the orbital MACs will do their best to hold back the fleet but if they reach ground level it will be up to you to hold them back understood" all the soldiers snapped into a salute and replied "sir, yes sir" in unison. "Well" Steve muttered "we're screwed" "why do you say that" asked Adams "because" replied Steve "the covenant found Reach which was one of the most well hidden UNSC military base this side of the sol system if they found it how long will it be till they find earth" "long enough that we'll have taken the fight to their front door as well." The soldiers piled into their pelicans still laughing and joking about how many covenant they'd kill but beneath that laughter was fear pure, unforgiving, dark fear.

## 2. Ground zero

Steve and Adams sat in the pelican their MA5B assault rifles between their knees as they imagined the horrors they would face at ground level, the other soldiers weren't helping at all "I here they rip out your eyes and eat them" one soldier said "nah it's your stomach they rip out and they wear it like a hat" replied his friend. "Nice cheery atmosphere as always" said Steve sarcastically "now let's stop filling each other's head with horrific images and just focus on staying alive" "oh since you're the survival expert now how so how do we focus on staying alive" one of the soldiers shot back "well you can start by losing the attitude because you'll make it to ground level a helluv a lot quicker at terminal velocity catch my drift" the soldier opened his mouth as if to say something but quickly closed it again when he saw the look Steve shot him. "Now" said Steve "no one has any idea what we'll be fighting down there so we can't really prepare but the most important thing is to not let the covenant get their alien hands on nav data ok, so you see a console you wipe it clean of any data and you move on." The sergeant opened the door and exited the cockpit "you're right but you shouldn't go around giving orders that's my job." Just then the radio flared into life with several voices coming through at once Steve managed to piece together this "the covenant have landed, defences have been breached, we can't hold them back" the atmosphere in the pelican suddenly changed all the soldiers were silent as they absorbed what they had just heard. "We're almost a ground level so get your war faces and your gear on" shouted the sergeant in his voice that never seemed to get any quieter; Steve quickly checked that his MA5B had full ammo before shouldering it and banishing any thoughts of fear or nervousness from his mind and straightened his face it was as his CO had said when he was at boot camp "if you're going to die, die without fear in your face, give no quarter and show no fear." Just as Steve ran through his training the world exploded around him. He must have blacked out because when he opened his eyes he was lying in the wreck of the pelican bodies were littered either killed by impact of the plasma shot or the pelican hitting the ground but he was lucky to have survived but this meant he might have to walk through covenant controlled Reach on his own. "Steve you ok there" the familiar low voice of Adams was a strange comfort in the wreck "I'm fine" he replied and with great effort stood up his body hurt like hell he'd experienced pain before but nothing like this it felt like every nerve in his body was being simultaneously poked with red hot

needles. Steve wiped his face with his sleeve and looked to see it was covered in blood and his comrades blood it felt wrong just to be surrounded by so much death. "Come on Steve covies will be swarming here soon" "right" Steve replied, he mentally shook himself and took one last look at his fallen comrades before joining Adams in the long march to the FOB where they might find some information about what the fuck was going on.

### 3. On the offensive

Adams and Steve had marched for the best part of a day avoiding the covenant as much as they could but covenant patrols seemed to be everywhere but to be fair they're pelican had crashed behind enemy lines and they were walking back to the FOB. About ten kilometres away from the FOB Steve's radio crackled into life "this is Spartan Kelly 087 all FOB units divert to castle base immediately" the two soldiers stopped in their tracks "Spartans" said Steve "castle base" said Adams and almost simultaneously their jaws dropped, they turned east and started marching silently towards castle base. After a few hours of marching Steve stopped his eyes fixed on the covenant carrier that hovered above castle base "holy shit" Adams reached the top of the hill and he saw the carrier and his jaw almost hit the floor "they always said that every great civilization faces something they never expected, never prepared for, the covenant appears to be just that" Steve looked down at castle base defiantly "then we fight to the last man resisting them because in my eyes it's better to die resting an invader than join them." "That still doesn't change the fact that there's a massive fucking ship between us and castle" Steve considered this for a minute then saw some soldiers along the eastern edge of the hill "well we could rally the FOB troops and assault the outside of castle" Adams spots the soldiers "well I'll give you an A for effort but we can't take it with that many soldiers it'd be like taking a country with a battalion of men." "It could be done" replied Steve defiantly then opened radio communication with the other soldiers "this is Private Steven White to all FOB units do you copy, over" a gruff male voice answered "this is lieutenant James Ford where is your commanding officer" "we're all that's left of our unit our pelican was taken out by plasma fire sir." "Alright soldier we need to retake castle base back it's heavily guarded by covenant forces" "yeah we noticed" "don't get smart with me son, our main objective is to buy castles occupants some time to slip out the back understood" "copy that, let's do this." Steve and Adams check their ammo and grenades before vaulting over the side of the hill and jogging quickly and quietly up to the covenant line of defence "ok Dave take 'em nice and quiet" whispered Steve, Adams nodded a reply as he drew his knife and inserted into the back of an elite's skull, the elite collapsed but Adams caught it and dragged it out of sight. Steve moved up behind the nearest grunt slowly put his arm round its head then sharply jerked his hand down to its breather and crushed it suffocating it with oxygen. "Two down, forty thousand to go" Steve thought to himself and as he thought this he was only half paying attention to the elite charging towards him it was only when Adams shouted "look out!" that he saw it but by then it was too late.

### 4. we're doomed

The elite struck him like a hammer of the gods driving him back at least twenty feet winding him and possibly breaking a bone or two.

"Suppressing fire" shouted the lieutenant "negative" he heard Adams shout back "you might hit Steve." But Steve already had things under control you see while the elite was driving him back he had upholstered his pistol and was now pointing it up at the elites head, he grinned as he said "surprise mother fucker" and pulled the trigger not once, not twice but six times leaving the elite basically headless with brains and suchlike scattered across a wide radius. This commotion as you can imagine had created quite a bit a noise which had drawn the attention of the rest of the covenant defence force and the only words he heard were a quiet "oh shit" from one of the corporals before the covenants defence force charged at the UNSC soldiers. The UNSC soldiers got off several shots before the covenant force hit them but nothing was stopping them, they were like an unstoppable tide, the marines never stood a chance. After the covenant forces had mopped up the last of the marines on the hill they turned their attention to the two that had killed their brothers but those two were not down on the battlefield any more they had moved on to safer location.

Steve looked up from his hiding place to see if the massacre had ended and sure enough the covenant forces had moved back into their original positions, he checked his tracking beacon and saw that Adams was across the other side of plateau and this wasn't one of those nice rocky ones with lots of cover this was flat and open the two worst things it could be. His instincts told him to stay put but his training told him to go for it, it was like having France and Germany inside your head each wanting you to take their side but in the end he decided to make a run for it because a moving target was harder to hit. He stood up took a deep breath and ran a few covenant troops saw him and fired their plasma but no shot hit him just warmed his neck up a little, he reached the other end of the plateau and slid into the bushes next to Adams "cutting it a little close aren't we" said Adams "no just a nice pleasant mid-day jog" Adams smiled at Steves cockiness it was his best trait, in Steves opinion there wasn't a fortress in the world that could keep him out, that was in his opinion, in reality he was still physically and mentally strong but not to the extent that he could take on the entire covenant by himself, even though he liked to believe that. "Well we've got covies occupying most of Reach and our fleet probably isn't doing too well so I say we do the honourable thing, send castle base out" said Adams "with a bang" finished Steve, they looked at each other and nodded as cocked their weapons. Just as they were about to jump out from behind the bushes a radio transmission came through "this is green team leader we are under heavy covenant fire we need assistance immediately" "Dave where's green team" "about three clicks north of here" Steve stood up, looked up and then started walking up the hill towards green, he turned to look at Adams "well come on it's not every day a Spartan needs your help."

End  
file.